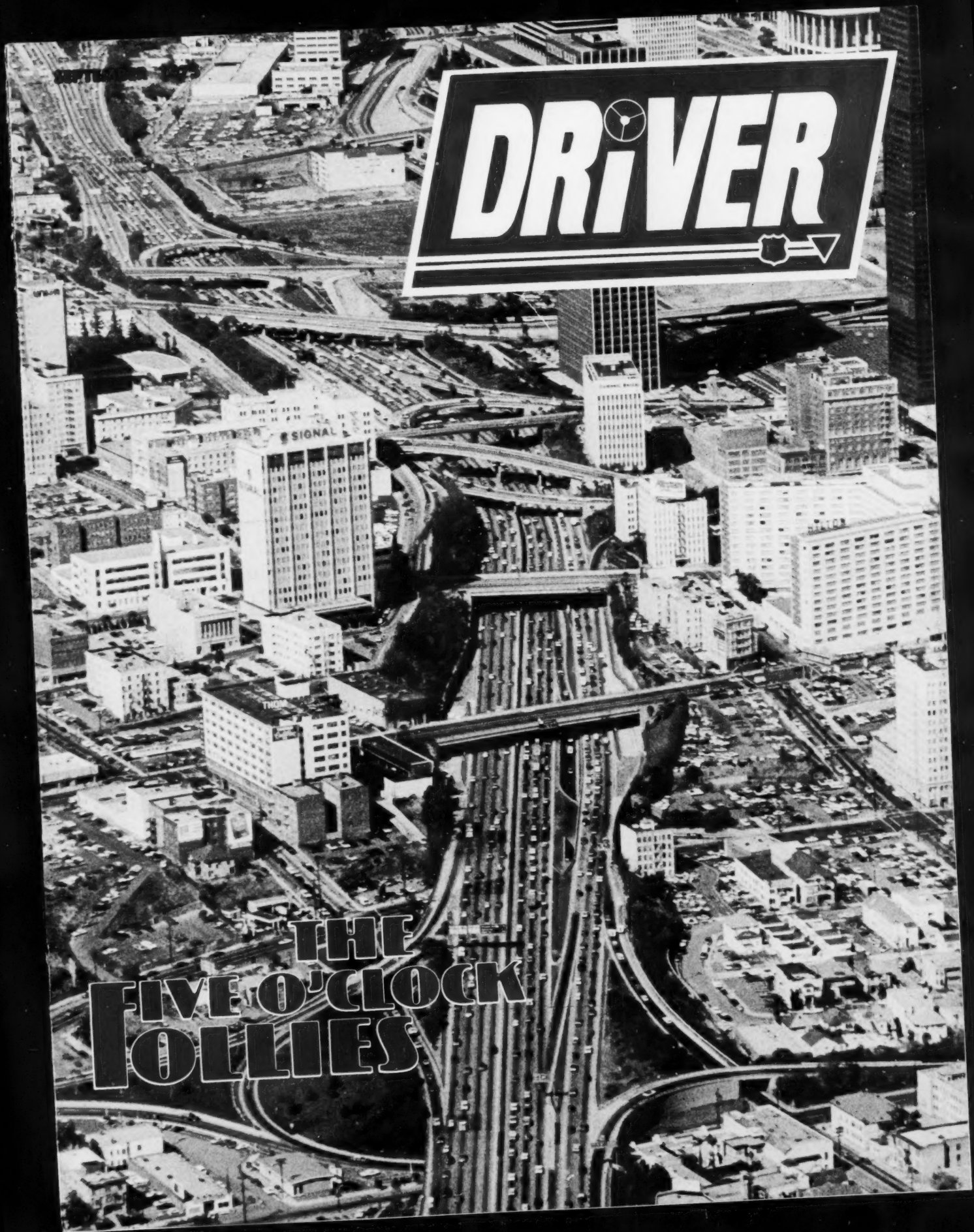
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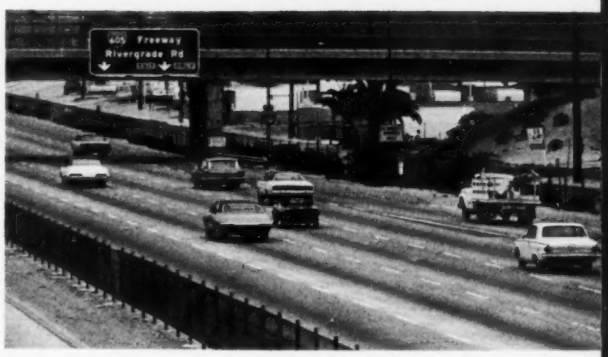

THE FIVE O'CLOCK FOLLIES

Freeways are the safest roads in America, but getting on and off the super slabs of concrete ribbon can be a real hassle. Anyone who's ever been hung up in the "five o'clock follies" knows what we're talking about. Freeways are no place for a timid or inexperienced driver.

If you're not familiar with the route you're going to take, check a map before you leave. Know the highway numbers and directions, interchanges, exit name or number, and the names of a few main cross streets preceding your chosen off-ramp.

Freeway on- and off-ramps usually have one thing in common—acceleration and deceleration lanes. The apparent inability of MOST MOTORISTS to use these lanes properly is probably the main reason for four-letter expletives on freeways today.

Take getting on a freeway, for example. Many drivers proceed down the on-ramp and, instead of using the lone acceleration lane to pick up equal speed and blend smoothly with traffic in the through lanes, they poke along, barge into the first available opening between cars (or force an opening), and cause all kinds of

continued

(left)
Lane changing fallacy—Don't be a constant lane switcher or ride the dividing lines. Contrary to some drivers' beliefs, "fast" lanes travel only 5 to 10 mph ahead of the "slow" lanes. Over several miles, the steady driver arrives within seconds of the erratic motorist.

DRIVER

THE TRAFFIC SAFETY MAGAZINE FOR THE MILITARY DRIVER

SEPTEMBER 1975

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE · HQ AIR FORCE INSPECTION AND SAFETY CENTER
Norton Air Force Base, California 92409

Lt Gen DONALD G. NUNN
The Inspector General, USAF

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Dr. FRANCIS S. McGLADE
Director of Safety
United States Army

RADM WM. ELLIS
Commander
Naval Safety Center

Capt. TOBIAS van ROSSUM DAUM
Editor

VIRGINIA HENDRIX
Managing Editor

SSgt DON HOLT
Technical Editor

FRANCIS R. FOWLER
Feature Editor

DON KELLEHER
Art Director

MSgt BILL FOSTER
Staff Artist

MSgt MIKE KEEFE
Staff Photographer

ALICE MILKEY
Editorial Administration

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Certain individuals shown in this magazine are not members of the Air Force and therefore do not conform to Air Force grooming standards.

THE EDITOR SPEAKS

DOUBLE CLUTCH

SAFETY RECALLS

If you've been reading DRIVER very long, you know we think it's great to be an automobile enthusiast. The person who really cares about cars naturally is interested in good maintenance and skillful driving. Such a person is a safer driver than the average motorist, even if he doesn't often think about safety. And that, in a nutshell, is what this magazine is all about.

So we are always sorry to hear drivers point to safety recalls as a sign of today's poor manufacturing quality and a reason to be less enthusiastic about cars in general.

Do you know what a really small number of cars are called in for inspection for possible safety defects? Do you know what a small percentage of those called in are actually found defective?

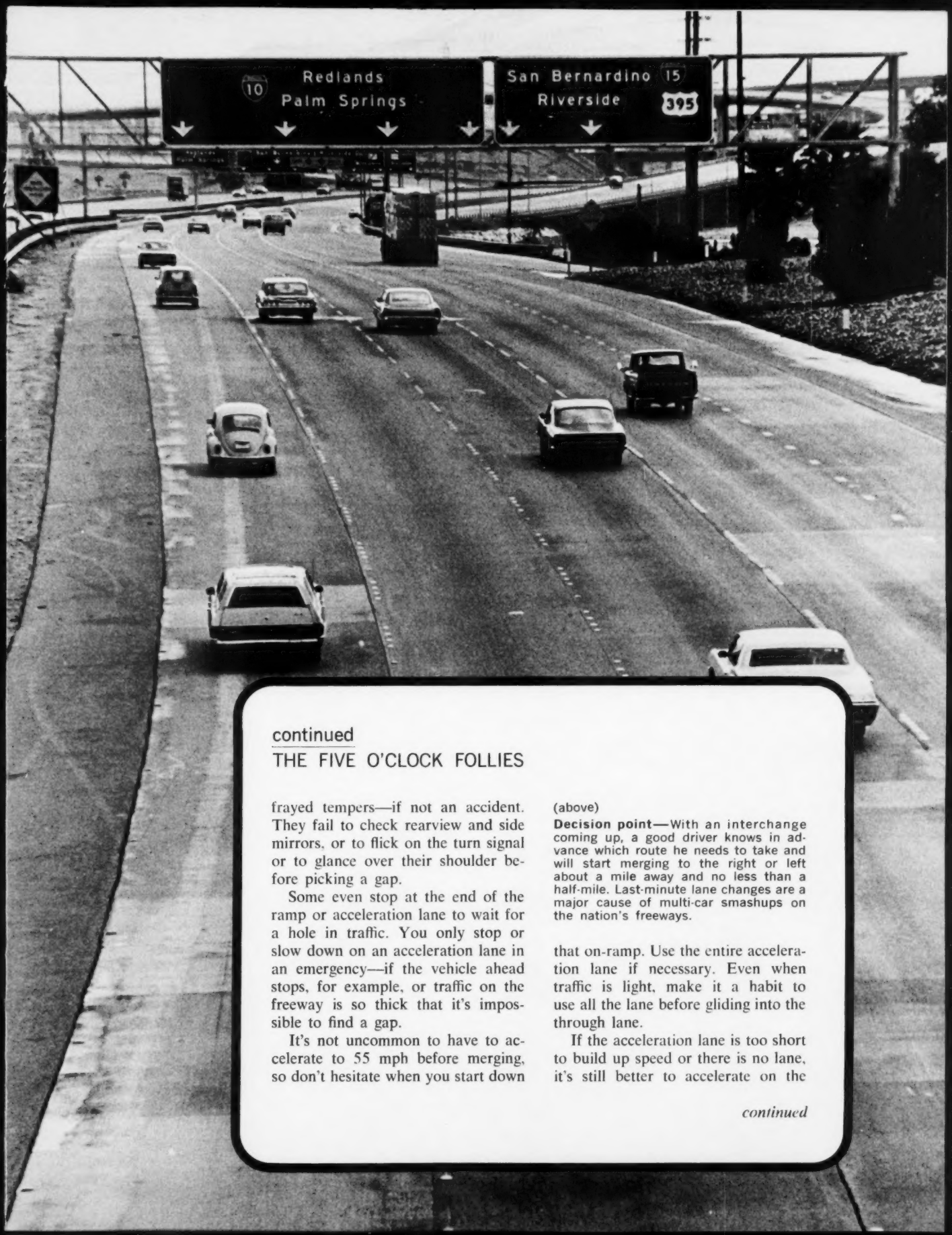
One major American manufacturer produced more than three million motor vehicles last year. This manufacturer recalled about 257,000 cars and trucks for inspection for possible safety defects. Only about 34,000 of those recalled had an actual or potential safety problem that had to be corrected. Those 34,000 vehicles represented about one percent of the company's production for the entire year.

Of course, if you were the owner of one of those 34,000 vehicles you probably weren't too pleased about the whole business. But actually, the recall program might have saved you some expensive inconvenience, even personal injury.

The recall program also helps the manufacturer eliminate human er-

continued on page 28

NEXT MONTH
Bruce Ogilvie, '75 Baja 500 Winner



continued

THE FIVE O'CLOCK FOLLIES

frayed tempers—if not an accident. They fail to check rearview and side mirrors, or to flick on the turn signal or to glance over their shoulder before picking a gap.

Some even stop at the end of the ramp or acceleration lane to wait for a hole in traffic. You only stop or slow down on an acceleration lane in an emergency—if the vehicle ahead stops, for example, or traffic on the freeway is so thick that it's impossible to find a gap.

It's not uncommon to have to accelerate to 55 mph before merging, so don't hesitate when you start down that on-ramp. Use the entire acceleration lane if necessary. Even when traffic is light, make it a habit to use all the lane before gliding into the through lane.

If the acceleration lane is too short to build up speed or there is no lane, it's still better to accelerate on the

(above)
Decision point—With an interchange coming up, a good driver knows in advance which route he needs to take and will start merging to the right or left about a mile away and no less than a half-mile. Last-minute lane changes are a major cause of multi-car smashups on the nation's freeways.

continued

(right)
Don't get boxed in—Always try to keep a protective cushion of space around you as traffic congestion eases and you pick up speed. Stay far enough behind and away from larger vehicles to maintain good visibility in all directions. The two most frequent freeway accidents are rear-end collisions and sideswipes.

(left)
Don't barge—blend!—Blend your way into through lanes from an on-ramp by being alert and adjusting your speed to prevailing traffic. Don't hesitate to give way to another driver because, if he must suddenly slow or stop, you may indirectly cause an accident that you won't even see.

paved shoulder or outside emergency lane of the freeway than to slow down or stop at the end of the on-ramp. On the other hand, if through-traffic is running slow, don't accelerate beyond traffic speed because you'll have to slow down again.

Through-lane drivers should practice driving courtesy by moving into the next lane to make a space for you to enter safely.

The secret of making safe exits is planning ahead. Assuming you know your exit ramp, start moving into the outside lane as soon as traffic signs indicate its nearness, preferably a mile ahead and no less than a half-mile if traffic conditions permit. Between getting on and off a freeway, exiting is the more dangerous of the two.

If you miss your exit, drive on to the next one. Don't slow down or stop, and don't panic.

Maintain prevailing traffic speed as you enter the outside lane and don't slow down until you move into the deceleration lane—then only gradually and watch out! Most freeway drivers, especially those who have been racking up the miles for a long period, consistently underestimate their exit approach speed by 10 to 30 mph. If the off-ramp sign says "Slow to 25," don't trust your senses—look at your speedometer.

Remember that under the best conditions it takes about 175 feet *after*

continued

(left)
Take your choice—Freeway ramps are divided into 10 basic designs, several of which are illustrated here. Nearly all of them have one thing in common—acceleration and deceleration ramps. How you drive them separates the cool heads from accidents waiting to happen.

your foot hits the brake to stop a car going 55 mph. And remember, too, over one-half of all off-ramp accidents involve single vehicles.

Now, if you suddenly discover you've taken the wrong exit, don't get shook. Simply continue off the freeway and take the nearest entrance back. Above all, don't stop or back up in an exit lane and don't try to drive across a divider strip to return to the through lanes.

In spite of fast traffic and special on- and off-ramp problems, a quarter-trillion miles of motoring annually prove freeways to be safer than surface streets. And there are millions of motorists who make it through the "five o'clock follies" every day and can smile about it.

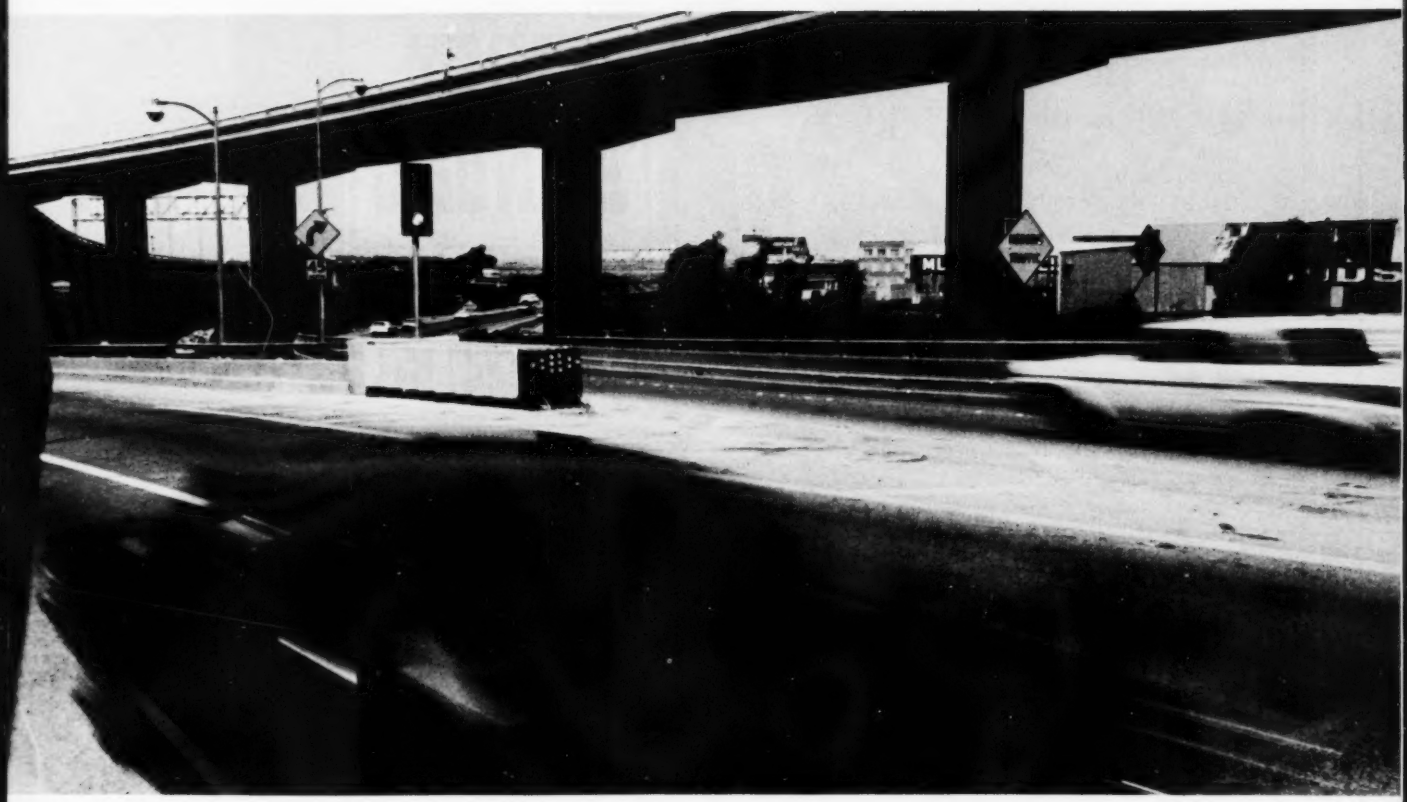
Getting on and off a freeway is no big thing . . . when you know how

Lane changing provides constant problem. Pony car driver, in obvious hurry, is cutting import off in rush to get into fast lane. Keep an eye out for those in a hurry. If there's an accident here, pony car will probably be long gone while import driver collects rear-end collision from following car.

At 55 mph, it takes a lot more room to stop than the trailing driver has left himself. Tailgating is major cause of freeway crashes.

(left)
Blind spot—Before beginning a lane change, always look in both your rear-view and side mirrors and over your shoulder to check for other vehicles, especially motorcycles. They may be "sneaking" into your "blind spot," as this two-wheeler is about to do.

(below)
Slow pokes beware—Traffic conditions permitting, pick up the posted speed as you reach the on-ramp and legal speed in the acceleration lane. Be prepared to merge with vehicles in the through lanes without slowing down or causing them to reduce speed.



(left)
Common complaint of freeway drivers is slow traffic. Driver of slow-lane sedan is moving too slow for conditions. Improper speed has forced two heavy trucks and a passenger car to swing into faster lane to pass. Many freeway systems have minimum speed limits and most of them are well enforced. Perhaps those drivers who can't or won't keep up belong on slower surface streets.

1.

In what form was the radiator cap on the Hispano-Suiza?

2.

In what year did the first Chevy V-8 appear?

3.

What do the following ladies do?

a. Shirley Muldowney
b. Debbie Lawlor
c. Donna Mae Mims
d. Paula Murphy
e. Pat Moss

4.

Who is Giacomo Agostini and why is he saying those nice things about motorcycles?

5.

If there is a car resting on your body, what have you neglected to do?

6.

What is a "Stovebolt?"

"DRIVER" MAGAZINE
TRIVIA/NOSTALGIA TEST

7.

What car was described as "An Oldsmobile sucking a lemon?"

8.

If you owned a 1937 KB Lincoln, what was the composition of the cylinder heads?

9.

You are lying in a cactus patch and your motorcycle is beside you in two pieces. What happened?

10.

What is Dan Gurney's middle name?

11.

What was the unique feature of the 2J?

12.

What was the unique feature of the J2?

13.

What is your next move if your car skids to the left?

14.

Who owned and raced the Scarab race cars?

15.

Who wears the white cowboy hat at Indy and Ascot?

16.

What would you probably hit if you ran off the course and through the hay bales at Sebring?

17.

Why don't bicyclists get more tickets?

18.

Who hails from Randleman, NC?

19.

What does GTO mean?

20.

What is an ARDUN head?

ANSWERS

1. Flying swan
2. 1917
3. a. Drag racing
   b. Motorcycle jumping
   c. SCCA Production classes
   d. Bonneville Speed Records
   e. Rallying
4. He races motorcycles for a living, and just may be the best road racing rider in the world.
5. Install jackstands or blocks after jacking.
6. A Chevy
7. The Edsel
8. Aluminum
9. The last time you checked the nuts and bolts for tightness, you forgot to check the swing arm pivot bolts.
10. Sexton
11. This Chaparral had an auxiliary engine that turned fans that sucked the car down onto the track, promptly earning it the name "Vacuum Cleaner."
12. Besides the turbo Starfire, it was Oldsmobiles' only performance option. It had 3 carbs.
13. Steer left, into the skid, but don't overcorrect.
14. Lance Reventlow
15. J. C. Agajanian
16. Airplanes. It's at the Sebring Airport.
17. We don't know either. They're subject to the same laws as motorists and so should be ticketed accordingly.
18. Richard Petty
19. Gran Turismo Omologato
20. A cylinder head conversion to convert flathead FoMoCo products to overhead valve operation. Designed by Zora Arkus-Duntov, who was later the father of the Corvette.

Sgt Andy Sharp, USAF
Radar Repairman
63d Avionics Maint Sq (MAC)
Norton AFB, CA 92409
Age 21, Single
Hometown: Lawton, Oklahoma
Photo by Sgt Jim Reilly, Jr., USAF

2d Lt Ken Dennett, USMC
Infantry/Weapons Platoon Commander
L-3-5, 1st Mar Div
Camp Pendleton, CA 92055
Age 24, Single
Hometown: Carson City, Nevada

OPIN

Our readers "tell it like it is"

In one of DRIVER's periodic opinion surveys among randomly selected readers, three out of four service people said they are "good drivers" and two were emphatic about it. The fourth was a "maybe."

Responding to other questions, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force readers were unanimous in their belief that driving is not an automatic thing—it requires concentration. Three of the four said they regularly use seat belts, the nonuser labeling the procedure "too much of a hassle."

They were split in their opinions as to whether manufacturers are doing enough to make cars safer or meeting the needs of the car-driving public. Most of them believe the auto industry thinks of the buck first, the public second.

To make drivers safer they recommended more education and stiffer penalties for traffic violators, especially for drunken driving. And what do they want in a new car? Better gas mileage, better construction, and more durability.

---

1. Do you consider yourself to be a good driver? Why (or why not)?

Sgt Sharp:

"I think so. It's little things like seeing someone getting ready to cross the street, so you stop for them. I haven't had any tickets since high school."

Lt Dennett:

"Yes, I think so. First, I haven't had any accidents in seven years of driving. Two, I haven't had any close calls and no tickets or violations."

Amn Hardison:

"I don't know. I had a ticket once for running a stop light but it wasn't my fault, so I don't claim that one. Sometimes I don't have my mind on it but, when I do, I guess I'm a pretty good driver."

HM Moore:

"Yes. I've been driving since I was 16 and never had a ticket in my life. No wrecks, either. I try to observe all the driving rules and regulations."

2. Do you really think it's necessary to concentrate on driving—or do you think driving is just kind of automatic?

Sgt Sharp:

"It's not really automatic. If you don't pay attention, you're going to run into something."

A1C Marty Hardison, USAF
Passenger Service Specialist
63d Aerial Port Sq, 63d MAW (MAC)
Norton AFB, CA 92409
Age 19, Married
Hometown: New Bern, North Carolina

HM1 Jerry Moore, Jr., USN
Lab Technician
1st Hosp Co, 3rd Med Bn, 3rd Mar Div
Camp Schwab, Okinawa
FPO San Francisco 96602
Age 28, Married
Hometown: San Antonio, Texas
Photo by Sgt Oscar Sester, USMC

IONS

Lt Dennett:
"It's never an automatic thing, because you've got the human factor involved. You can't just put yourself in automatic and drive down the road."

Amn Hardison:
"I think it's necessary to concentrate, because you'll get in a lot of trouble if you don't. If you've got something else on your mind, you just can't concentrate on driving."

HM Moore:
"No, it's not automatic. You have to know rules and regulations. You have to know your car and its capabilities."

3. Do you wear safety belts? Why do you (or why don't you) wear them?

Sgt Sharp:
"Well, I did before I got this 1932 Ford coupe. I had a '71 Camaro—it had a shoulder belt arrangement and I wore that. I haven't got seat belts installed in this car yet."

Lt Dennett:
"Yes—partly because I have a '74 Javelin which has a buzzer. I could have had the buzzer disconnected, but I think it's a habit that should be formed. Had I not had the buzzer, I probably wouldn't have worn it. I think the lap belt is pretty sound, but I've heard the shoulder harness could break your neck or your back. The one advantage I see is that maybe a broken neck is bad, but being chopped up in a windshield is worse."

Amn Hardison:
"No, I don't wear them. It's too much of a hassle to put them on. My present car has a whole lot of them—they're all over the place . . . even has one in the middle. I guess I might start using them if I was riding with someone who scared me to death."

HM Moore:
"Yes, I wear safety belts. My family wears them most of the time. I can't start the car until we buckle up, although my wife doesn't like them. If I got another car and it didn't have them, it would depend on whether I could afford it whether I'd put them in."

4. What would you do to make drivers and cars safer?

Sgt Sharp:
"They're already doing a pretty good job making cars safer. The main thing on a car is how it responds when you turn the wheel and it's got to be able to stop. Most new cars now have front disc brakes, and they also are set up for radial tires. I don't think there's any legislation that could make you a safer driver—people's personalities figure into the way they drive."

Lt Dennett:
"I think they ought to have less cars and more rapid transit like monorails, Amtraks—things like that. As long as you have an independent unit

continued

Sgt Sharp

Lt Dennett

Amn Hardison

HM Moore

like a car moving around and you've got the variables of alcohol and sleep and on and on and on, driving's never going to be entirely safe. I think we ought to put our money and time into rapid transit, community type. I think they could improve the bumper system a hell of a lot . . . develop a hydraulic compression shock affair. I think this expandable dash board is a pretty good idea—as soon as you have contact at a certain speed the whole dash comes off and you have like an air mattress effect. Drinking is the only driver problem I see. You might have a law where you automatically lose your license if you're convicted of drunk driving."

Amn Hardison:

"I would get people to concentrate more on their driving. I don't know about the cars."

HM Moore:

"I'd send them (unsafe drivers) to driver's education classes. Drunk drivers should be put in jail on the first offense—don't give them a second chance—and have them all go through an alcohol rehabilitation program. You're not going to cure a drinker by being nice to him. Once you're convicted of drunk driving, I don't think you should ever be allowed to have a driver's license again, especially if it's a fatal accident. We need stricter laws, better enforcement, higher fines for traffic violations, and a big education program with lots of publicity."

5. What qualities do you look for in a car?

Sgt Sharp:

"I'd look for performance and handling. I wouldn't want something that would get below 15 mpg—I get about 18 to 20 now on the freeway."

Lt Dennett:

"Because I'm a bachelor, I began with a Javelin—looking for something suitable to my type of life—but to do it all over again, I'd look for something with better gas mileage, space, ability to carry luggage, durability. I think everyone should go through the sports car phase, but I've grown out of it—it's very expensive. I'm thinking in terms of something like a Datsun. I'm afraid to say safety is not one of the things I'm looking for—that's last on my list—just durability and gas mileage."

Amn Hardison:

"I let my husband check it out when I bought a car. I don't think they're built out of very good materials when they crack up like they do. I'd look for one that gives pretty good gas mileage. I really like convertibles, so I'd probably look for a sports car."

HM Moore:

"First, the economics; second, workmanship in the car. I'd like a better shoulder harness than what they now have."

6. Do you think auto manufacturers are meeting the needs and desires of the car-driving public?

Sgt Sharp:

"They're about a year behind, although they're kind of coming around to it now. I think Detroit went about it backwards when they went after emission conrol. They made the engine displacement bigger and dropped the compression. They just lowered the overall performance and cut the mileage."

Lt Dennett:

"Definitely not. It's just pure and simple economics—supply and demand. They're not putting out any more than they have to. They could create a 200,000-mile tire, or a car with gas mileage up to 40 mpg, or a car that would last 20 years if they wanted to. It's understandable. In their business, they want to make money. They're accommodating the car-driving public only when forced to by the government. A clear example of that is the 1974 deadline on emission control which the manufacturers didn't meet and they could have met . . . easily."

Amn Hardison:

"I guess they are. Every year they come out with something new. I'd like to see them put on a little beeper so that whenever someone was following you too close or someone was going to pull out in front of you, it would beep automatically and then you'd know to move over or slow down or whatever."

HM Moore:

"I think so—as far as style and stuff like that goes, but not workmanship. I think they're putting out enough safey devices in cars today, but there's always room for improvement."

Miss DRIVER

CAROL FLORES

"A dirty air filter can cost your car a mile per gallon at 50 mph. With gas prices the way they are today this is something I don't want, so I make it a routine practice to check the air filter.

"All you have to do is take it out and hold it up to the sun, or to a flashlight if you check it at night. If the light doesn't penetrate the air filter —replace it."

THE BACKYARD MECHANIC

OPERATIO

OR, HOW T

ON MOTHBALL

TO STORE YOUR CAR

What happens when you get orders to Korea or Thule and you can't take your car with you? Well, you could sell it, but let's say it's a good car (and almost paid for) so you decide to store it for the time you'll be gone. What to do and how to do it--here's what you'll need to know.

INSIDE OR OUTSIDE?

If the paint on your car is marginal, or if you live in a fairly temperate area, you can store your vehicle outside. However, if you have custom paint or live some place like Chandler, Arizona, or Seattle, Washington, then you'd better consider inside storage. The price difference is considerable though, so let's do some simple arithmetic.

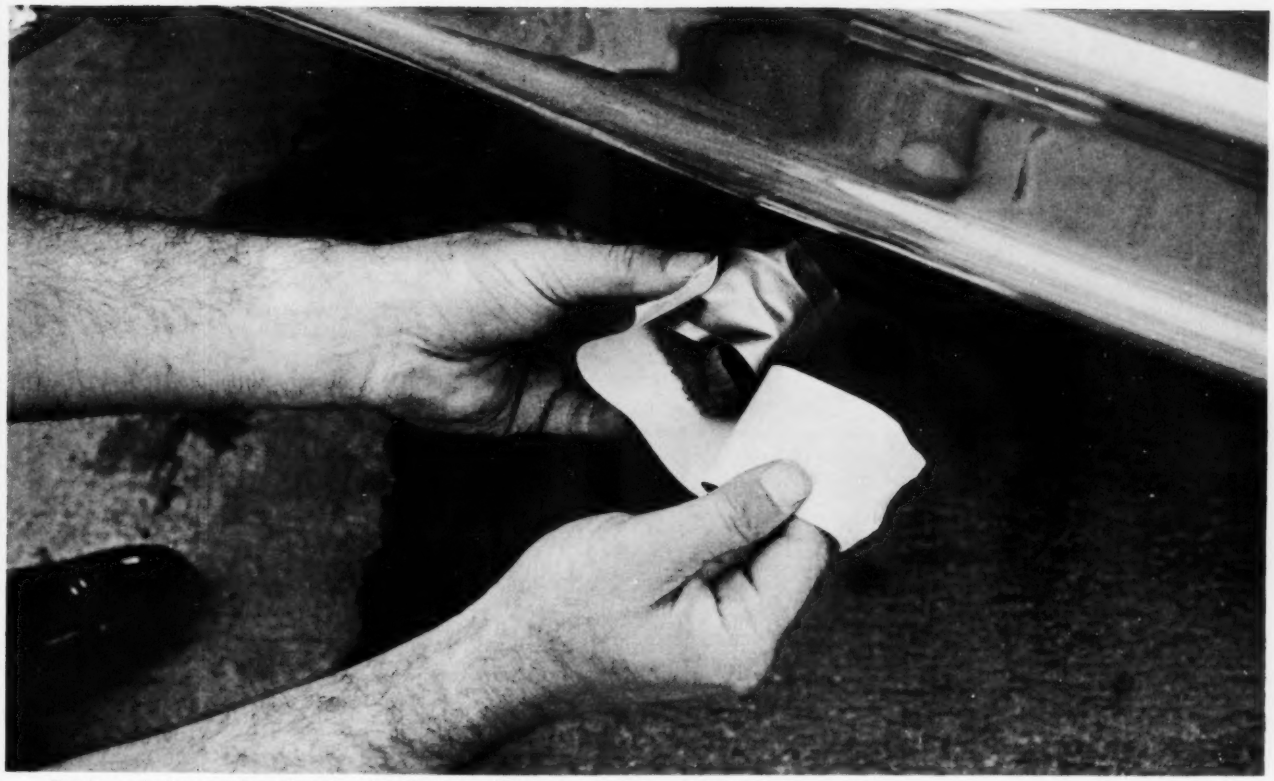
Average inside storage costs about $30 per month, so for a tour to Korea the cost would be $360. Outside storage averages about $6 per month or $72. Now, for that $288

continued

"Outdoor storage is cheaper but it has its disadvantages . . ."

The air cleaner should be sealed to prevent FOD (foreign object damage) or moisture from entering the engine and messing up its internals. Some cars have two air entrances so check and seal both. A few vehicles have a "ram air" system with ducts connected from the air cleaner to the front of the car. Disconnect these ducts at the air cleaner and seal them as shown above.

Inside storage is available for $30 to $40 per month. Be sure to check local fire laws though; in some areas you must **completely** remove all fuel to store your car inside, and you can't leave a kerosene/oil mixture in the tank and fuel lines for corrosion protection. You should also assure that the storage area you select has a good security system.



Don't neglect to pack and seal exhaust pipes. While we advocate sealing the engine while it's warm, you must allow sufficient time for the tailpipes to cool before packing them with cloth. Old T-shirts or towels are fairly easy to ignite, and stuffing them in a hot tailpipe is a fast way to have a disastrous fire.

continued

THE BACKYARD MECHANIC

difference you can buy a pretty good paint job.

ENGINE AND RUNNING GEAR

The most important thing to remember when mothballing the engine is—do it while it's warm. All the following procedures are no help if moisture has a chance to seep into a cold engine's internals.

First off, try to time your storage actions so they closely follow an oil and filter change. Clean oil is always a good idea, but it's doubly important for storage.

Safely drain or siphon as much gas as you can out of the tank. Mix up a 3- or 4-quart batch of kerosene and oil, dump it in the tank and bounce the back end to thoroughly slosh and coat the inside of the tank.

Remove the spark plugs and ground the large ignition wire coming from the coil to the distributor. Pour one ounce per cylinder of nondetergent oil through the spark plug holes. Use the same weight you normally use for local driving.

Reinstall the plugs, but not the coil wire, and turn the engine over for 5 to 10 seconds. This will coat the cylinders with oil and draw the kerosene/oil mixture into the fuel pump and carburetor to help the rust-proofing process.

Relieve the tension on all drive belts (fan, power steering, air conditioner, etc.) to prevent stretching and belt damage during storage.

Insure your radiator is topped off and rust-inhibiting anti-freeze rated to approximately —20° is added.

continued

Insure transmission and rear axle fluid levels are correct.

Remove the battery, and if it's not a "lifetime guarantee" type, sell it or throw it away. "Lifetime" type batteries will usually take a charge after sitting for a year or more, whereas a conventional battery normally will not.

Get some duct (silver colored fabric) tape, plug and tape the exhaust pipe(s) and the air cleaner. On older cars, also plug and tape the breather on the valve cover.

BODY AND INTERIOR

Use a good upholstery cleaner and lots of elbow grease on the interior. This will clean and soften the upholstery and get it ready for an application of Armor All or similar preservative. Don't forget to also treat any plastic knobs or dials on the dash panel, and double treat a vinyl dash. Use neatsfoot oil for leather interiors.

A light layer of vaseline will preserve the chrome, while bright-metal trim needs no treatment.

We suggest use of a preservative liquid on tires also, to help prevent sidewall cracking. It's a good idea to treat trunk, door seals, and vinyl tops, too.

FINAL PREPARATION

If feasible, jack the car up and put it on jackstands. This will eliminate tire flat-spotting and ease the strain on shocks, wheel bearings, etc. If you can't put it up on blocks, increase the air pressure in the tires 10 to 15 pounds.

Finally, open a window just a crack and cover up your trusty steed with a good quality car cover. If you live in a windy area, however, don't cover your car. The wind may cause the cover to flap and ruin the paint. Also, don't use plastic to cover your car. It can't "breathe" and moisture may collect inside.

WHEN YOU RETURN

Upon your return, just basically reverse the steps. Add gas (the kerosene/oil mixture will probably have evaporated), install a freshly charged battery, and tighten all belts. Disconnect the fuel line between the fuel

To help prevent moisture from entering your engine, insert some absorbent cloth, such as an old towel, into all engine openings. Here, a rag is put into the valve cover breather hole on an older style car.

After stuffing the opening with cloth, use duct tape to completely seal the opening. The same procedure applies to the opening where the breather connects to the air cleaner.

pump and carburetor. Provide a catch basin for the gasoline and have your buddy turn the engine over 10 to 15 seconds. This will both pump out any residue in the fuel lines and provide oil to the engine parts.

Reconnect the fuel line, reinstall or unground the coil wire, install new spark plugs, and start it up. You may experience a hard start and uneven running, but it should smooth out in a few minutes.

Check for fluid leaks, insure all your lights are working, buckle up, and then drive off to find out what's been happening since you did the old "mothball" trick.

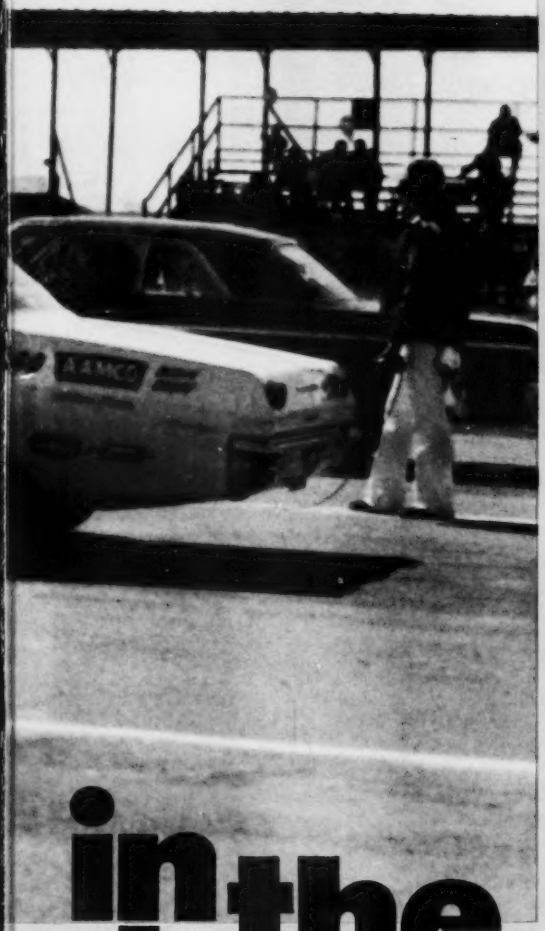
(DRIVER wishes to thank Mr. Maurice Oliver, AMSA #19, U.S. Army, San Bernardino, California, for his assistance in the preparation of this article.)

This is the way to go. The blocks are new and sturdy and are placed under the outermost ends of the A-frame. You can also block the chassis, but this means your shocks will rest in the extended position and may allow the hard chrome portion of the exposed shock rod to corrode. We also recommend that you remove the wheels and tires and store them in a secure place, or at least somewhere where they can't be seen so a casual thief won't get ideas.

Although his wife still hasn't forgiven him for using her good bedspread, this fellow has the right idea. He's selected an approved parking space and notified the security police of the length of time the car will be stored. When you know someone is looking after your property, it can really ease your mind.

(above)
Fred Elsass launches his "Pacesetter" off the line during stock elimination runs at Amarillo, Tex.

(left)
Elsass's record-setting Chevy at La Place Dragway, Louisiana. No matter what you drive, Fred recommends regular maintenance done by the book, cleanly and carefully.



in the driver's seat

TSGT FRED ELSASS

It's only been a year since we had a DRIVER article about TSgt Fred Elsass. But a year's a heck of a long time for Elsass to go without setting a national drag racing record. In "An Air Force Record-Setter," September '74 DRIVER, we reported on Elsass's successful attempt to set a National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) R/Stock* Automatic record at La Place Dragway, La. At that time, Elsass also held the International Hot Rod Association (IHRA) R/Stock elapsed time (ET) and top speed record and had been featured "In the DRIVER's Seat" in the November '73 DRIVER.

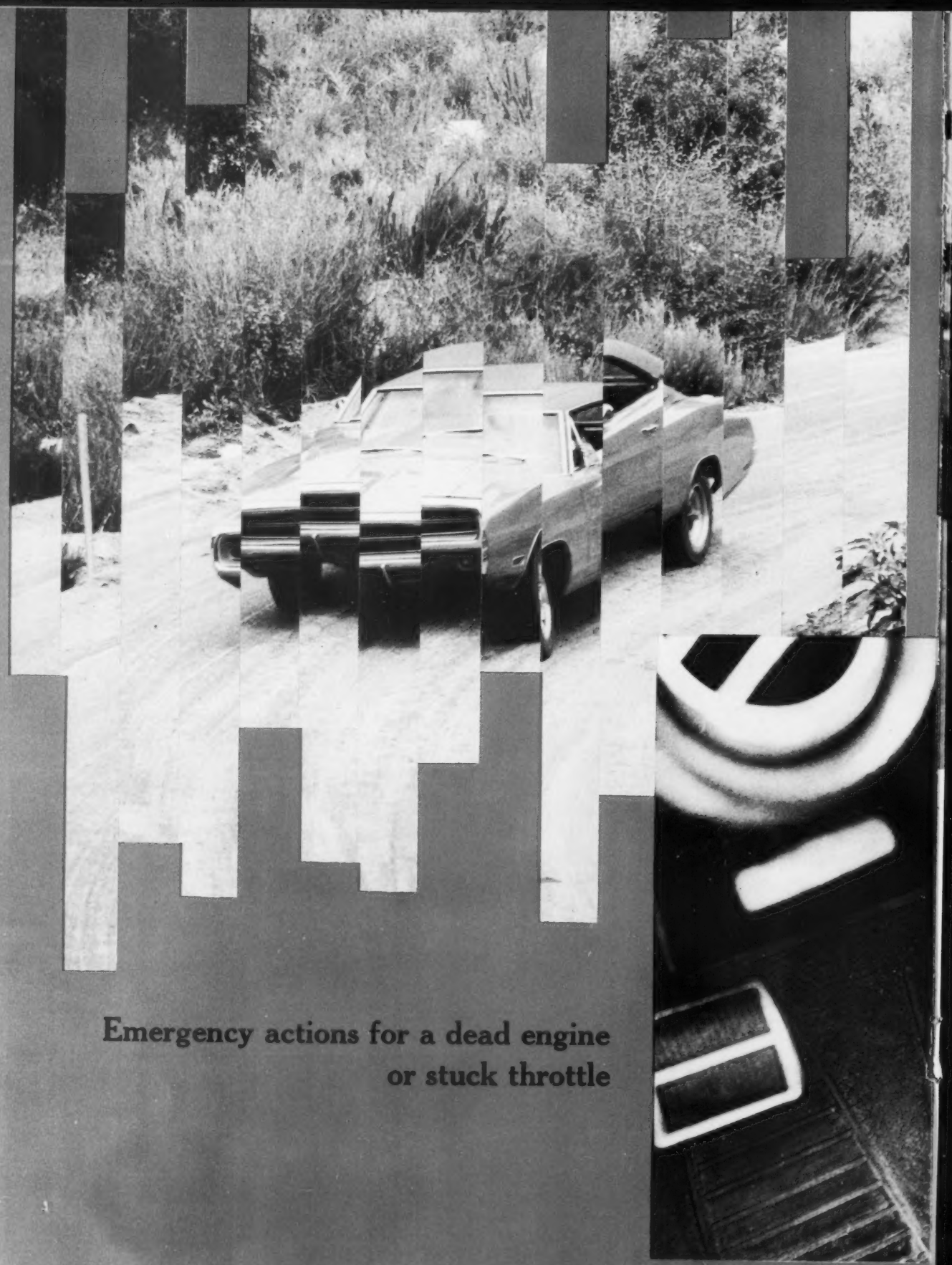
Well, the Dyess AFB, Texas-based NCO has done it again. On April 18, 1975 at Amarillo, Tex. Elsass pushed his 283 cu. in-powered '65 Chevy to a new IHRA R/Stock record of 14.98 at a top speed of 92.12 for the quarter mile. Fred explained that he actually ran a 15.46 at 88.58 mph, but because the Amarillo track is at 3800 feet, he was given an altitude correction to the lower ET and higher mph. He added that all drag-race sanctioning bodies factor records to sea level so record runs can be made and certified anywhere in the country.

When we accompanied Fred to La Place, we were amazed at how easily he nailed the record with his first two runs. But Fred tells us it wasn't that way in Amarillo. He had to make 12 passes before he was able to run under the ET record although he was bettering the mph record on every run. Surprisingly, Fred thanks Oura Clare, the man who does his engine work, for Fred's setting the record. It seems that Clare had taken Fred's car out to the local strip at Abilene, Tex., and ran well under the record unofficially. Well Fred said if it wasn't for that he would probably have given up on the record about the 11th pass. But he just couldn't bear the thought of somebody going faster than he could in his own car.

Fred didn't fare too well in competition later that weekend as he bowed out in the first round of stock eliminations due to no bite out of the hole. But Elsass was very pleased to have just gotten the record, since it was the first time he'd driven a four-speed in competition in nearly two years. So with continued help from his sponsors, friends, and family, Fred Elsass is looking forward to another big year on the strips with his record-setting "Pacesetter." And, of course, Fred also has his eye on a couple of more records.

**"Stock" in drag racing means the car must be maintained and run in basically stock condition—the way it came from the factory. The letter "R" is a finer class designation based on the horsepower-to-weight ratio.*

Fred Elsass—owner and driver of the national record-holding Chevy.



Emergency actions for a dead engine or stuck throttle

cooling a CRISIS

Nearly every car driver has faced moments of terror and fear behind the steering wheel at one time or another. Knowing what to do in an emergency, however, can quickly reduce such a situation to a case of low-grade heart-pounding.

For example, what do you do when the engine dies and you suddenly lose all power braking and power steering assistance?

Brake hard—When your power brakes go out, use both feet if necessary to hold the brake pedal all the way to the floor. Pumping the pedal won't help. DO NOT set the parking or emergency brake.

Or, what do you do if the accelerator pedal or throttle linkage sticks in a wide-open position?

If you're in heavy traffic, traveling at high speed, coasting down a hill, rounding a sharp curve, or navigating a mountain road, either one of these crises will start your adrenaline pumping in short order.

First things first. Your engine's conked out—forget about why. Above all, don't panic. Keep your cool and concentrate on what to do.

Continue steering and push the power brake pedal all the way to the floor—use both feet if necessary. Pumping won't help; just hold it there. Remember to leave the transmission in gear to retain some use of the power steering and power brakes.

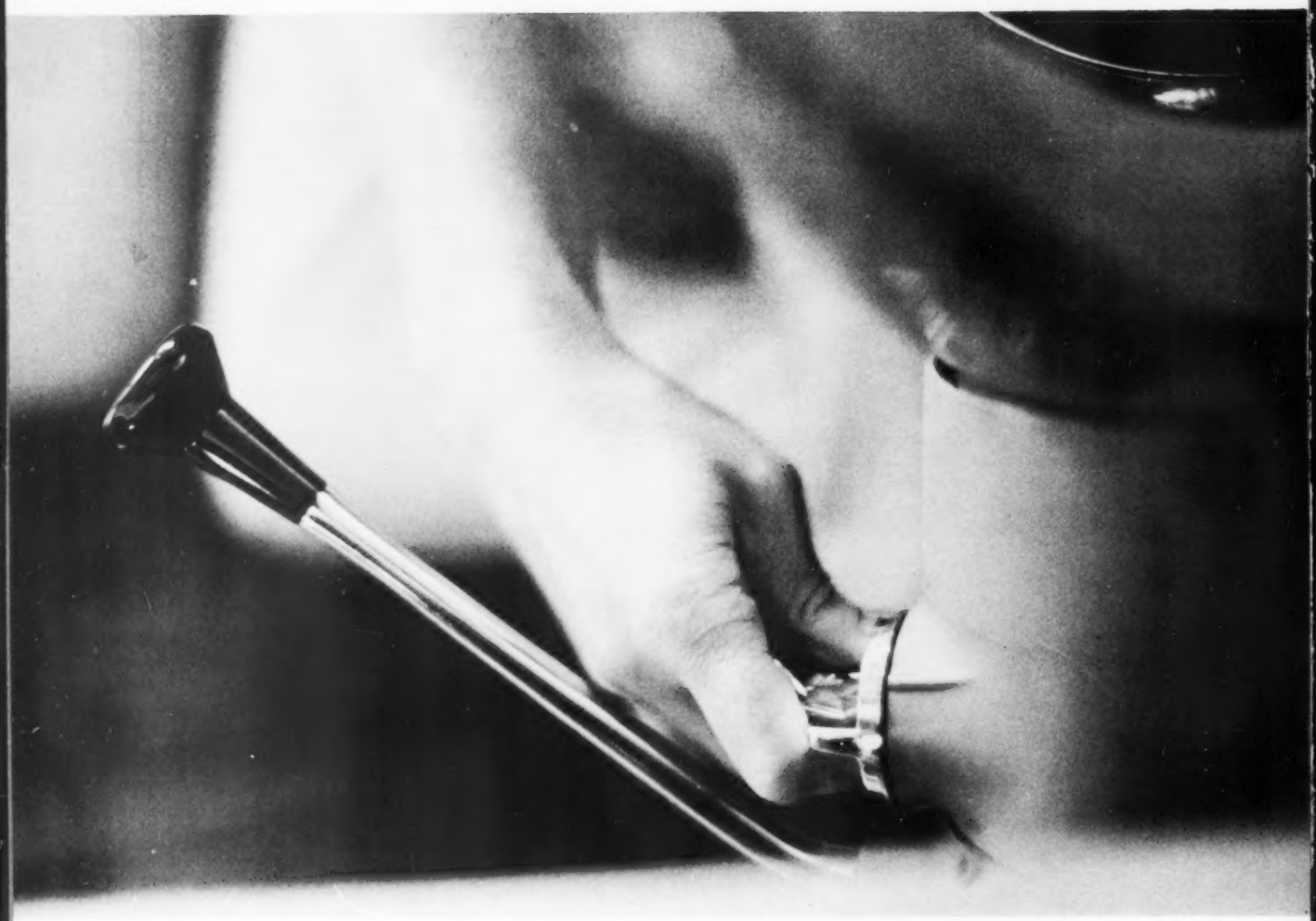
Grip the steering wheel with your hands in the 9 and 3 o'clock position and steer hard toward a stopping place well off the road and out of the flow of traffic. You still have brakes and steering and, with extra muscle power, you can control your vehicle to a safe stop.

Contrary to any advice you may have received for the loss of power brakes, the experts now say DO NOT set the parking or emergency hand or foot brake. It could lock up the rear wheels and throw your car into a skid, particularly if the pavement is wet or slippery.

ACCELERATOR STUCK

Now that we've handled that little heart-stopper, what's the first aid for accelerator problems? Again, no rea-

continued



Turn off ignition—If the accelerator pedal or throttle linkage sticks in the wide-open position, turn off the ignition immediately to prevent a "blown" engine.

continued

COOLING A CRISIS

son to panic. Turn off the ignition and guide your steed to a safe parking spot. If you have power brakes and steering, and chances are you do, simply follow the directions above.

If the throttle control is not jammed at wide-open, and the transmission control is not also jammed, the transmission could be placed in "neutral." This will allow the engine to continue operating and preserve the power assistance while you bring your car to a stop off the road.

Should you have any doubt whether the throttle is stuck wide-open, however, the best procedure is to turn off the ignition to shut down the engine If you don't do it right away and the throttle plate IS broken or jammed in a wide-open position, watch out! You will very shortly damage, or possibly "blow" the engine.

Some drivers may be afraid to turn off the ignition for fear of locking the steering wheel. Unless you're driving a model with a nonlegal locking device, it's impossible to lock the steering wheel without moving the gear shift into "Park" position. And you cannot do this without literally wrecking the transmission if the car is still moving.

For autos with a standard transmission and locking steering wheel, the ignition key must be turned all the way to the left or, in some vehicles, turned off and pulled partially out or all the way out, before the steering locks. Best bet is to know in advance how your ignition operates

Neutral is nice—If the throttle control is not jammed wide-open and the transmission control is not also jammed, leave the ignition "on" and shift into "neutral."

the locking mechanism. Check it out yourself.

There you have it. Two emergencies. Two relatively simple ways to handle them. And two moments of relief instead of terror.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: DRIVER appreciates the assistance of Richard A. "Doc" Whitworth, manager of Advanced Driver Education Research at the General Motors Proving Ground, Milford, Mich., in preparing this article.)

All power gone—If you lose both power brakes and steering because the engine dies or you have to turn off the ignition, brake hard, grip steering wheel, and carefully head for a safe stopping place out of traffic flow.

BACKFIRE

OUTA SIGHT?!

Recently, while returning to the base with some friends we had a very close call with death. We were traveling about 60 mph along a divided highway. In front of us was a truck with no taillights. I saw the truck perfectly and I figured the driver did also. As we quickly gained on the slower vehicle, I noticed the driver made no attempt to move into the passing lane. I shouted for him to turn and he swerved, missing the truck by a few inches. It was then he confessed he had always had problems seeing at night and had not seen the truck until I had shouted. Since then I have talked to many people who have trouble with night vision.

I think it should be mandatory that all states adopt a plan to somehow test all people applying for a license for night vision. A great percentage of all fatal accidents occur at night and maybe this could be one of the problems. I would be interested to know how other readers feel about this.

A1C John Sheppard, USAF
Ft. Carson
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

We agree that all drivers should be tested for night vision, and night driving restrictions included in their license when necessary.

Your description of the incident also points out the importance of always having someone else in the car paying attention to the driving besides the driver. Congratulations on your action! You undoubtedly prevented a serious accident which might have cost the lives of everyone in the car. (See "29 Ways to Help Your Eyes Do the Driving," July '75 DRIVER.)

"CAMPER TALK"

Your camper readers might be interested to know that the electric code referred to in the article "Camper Talk" (April '75) is the Bargman Code. A properly rigged RV should conform to this code. It will save time, money and effort in the long run. Here is the code:

WIRE COLOR	PURPOSE
white	ground
blue	brake
green	running
black	hot (12v)
red	left turn
brown	right turn
yellow	backup

By the way, DRIVER is one of the very few magazines I read cover to cover. Great!

LCDR R. T. Witt, Jr.
Cinclantflt (N723)
Norfok, VA 23511

NAVY TALK

Your July 1975 issue makes reference to a "tired old saying among pilots that a midair collision can ruin your whole day." The "tired old saying" is older than you may think.

Long before the advent of modern "Birdmen," a Greek gentleman, Mr. Thucydides, was heard to comment,

"A collision at sea can ruin your entire day." By the way, he lived in Athens about 471-400 *B.C.*

Enjoy your magazine.

CDR G. L. McMichael
USS PYRO (AE-24)
FPO San Francisco 96601

Thanks for setting us straight. No doubt there are many variations on the original theme by Thucydides, but we have to admit the Navy is in on the ground floor with this one!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PACER VISIBILITY

I take exception to your comment in the July '75 issue (P. 24) about optimum visibility in the AMX Pacer. I recently drove one for several days and found that the side posts almost completely block the driver's view for lateral checking prior to freeway lane changes. It was distracting enough so that I would never buy one of these cars for that reason. Other than that, and the high price, I think it's a nice car. But for freeways, forget it!

Lt Col James R. Francis, USAF
AFISC/IGX
Norton AFB, CA 92409

The Pacer has more glass area than most full-sized luxury cars. However, as with all cars, it is up to the driver to individually check such factors as visibility and blind spots prior to purchase.

AVOIDING HAZARDOUS DRIVING

Regarding Charles Johnson's letter in the Backfire column of the June '75 issue, attached is a copy of Offutt AFB's current reg dealing with avoiding hazardous driving conditions.

This reg was exercised several times this past winter (ever hear of Omaha's Blizzard of '75?) and it *does* work, under both on- and off-duty conditions. It certainly would make sense for bases in areas with hazardous weather conditions to develop and implement such a plan. Any time "lost" would be more than made up for by the saving of just a single life.

Thanks for an excellent publication, and keep up the good work.

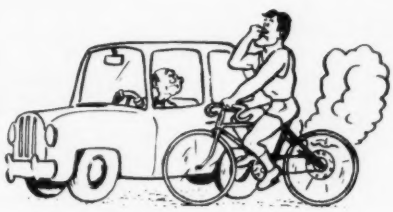
Maj George R. Hooper, Jr., USAF
544 Intel Exploit Sq
Offutt AFB, NE 68113

We also received a letter on this subject from Captain Wilkes of Rickenbacker AFB. He described how a former commander at Webb AFB, Texas, utilized the recall plan to keep people from coming in to work until a hazardous ice storm had passed. The several-hour delay cost some manhours but undoubtedly prevented accidents and injuries, judging from the many accidents that occurred in the local town during that period.

AUTO DRIVERS ARE THE BAD GUYS

In reference to Sgt. Cruse's letter in your March '75 issue relative to slow bicycle riders, you hit it right on the head when you commented that one must respect the other guy. This, of course, includes cyclists who have the legal right to use streets and roadways.

Furthermore, bicycles do not befoul the air with carbon monoxide



and other poisonous substances; they do not consume vast amounts of precious fossil fuels; they do not kill people, as cars do; they require very little metal, plastics, and rubber in their construction; and last but not least, bicycle riders are usually in better health than people who do not exercise, therefore will require less expenditure of tax dollars for health care.

Since exhaustion of natural resources and pollution of the Earth are putting human life in jeopardy on this planet, I contend that automobile drivers rather than bicycle riders are the ones that do not respect the other guy.

Col William R. Bunge, M.D., USA
Coco Solo Hospital
Drawer 5007
Cristobal, CZ

A lot of us agree with you, Doctor.

RADIAL TIRES AS SNOW TIRES?

This letter references the paragraph concerning snow radials on page four of the May '75 DRIVER. In it you say no state recognizes any radial tire as a snow tire. Yet the attached clipping from the Fort Meade daily bulletin states that an automobile equipped with Michelin radial tires satisfies the Maryland State Snow Tire Requirement on emergency snow routes providing the driver is carrying a certificate stating the tires are Michelin radials.

We in the Army also enjoy your DRIVER Magazine — keep up the good work.

CW3 Robert S. Jenkins, USA
4821-B Faith Court
Ft Meade, MD 20755

This obviously is an exception to our statement. Thanks for letting us know.

Address your letters to:
Editor
DRIVER Magazine
AFISC/SEDD
Norton AFB CA 92409

continued from page 2

Double Clutch

rors from the design, manufacture and assembly processes. For example, there was a period when one company had several recalls related to improper routing of brake lines. As a result, the brake engineers added special fasteners that made it nearly impossible to install the lines improperly.

The average car contains about 15,000 parts. Since there are 125 million vehicles in this country, the potential for defects is out of sight. If you look at it from that point of view, there's still plently of reason to be enthusiastic about cars.

No Premium Gas In Mexico

Motorists planning a trip to Mexico should be aware that 100-octane gasoline (Pemex Cien) is no longer available from that country's government-operated service stations.

Only two grades are now being dispensed – 81-octane regular (Pemex Nova) and 92-octane unleaded fuel (Extra Sin Plomo).

Some high-performance vehicles requiring high-octane fuel may not operate properly on either of these two grades. If in doubt, it's recommended that you check with a good mechanic before venturing too far below the border.

(Courtesy Auto Club of Southern California)

Odometer Change Is Federal Rap

Mechanics who fool around with odometers are asking for trouble. Setting back the odometer may enhance the salability of the vehicle, but any profits from the sale may be lost in the end.

As used car values have increased, so has the practice of altering the odometer mileage, according to MOTOR magazine.

A Federal law specifically states that it is illegal for anyone to disconnect, reset or alter the odometer with the intent of changing or concealing true mileage as registered on the odometer. If the unit has to be replaced or repaired because of a defect or due to an accident, a permanent written notice giving the number of miles on the car at the time of repair or replacement must be affixed to the left door frame.

The penalty for tampering with the device is $1,500 or three times the damages suffered by a car owner who buys a vehicle with an incorrect odometer, whichever sum is greater. MOTOR magazine says government officials are aware of what's going on and that it is only a matter of time until some of the offenders are caught.

Radial Retreads

Advertisements featuring radial retreads are starting to appear. They may be called "recycled radials" or go by yet another name, but are actually radial casings to which a new tread pattern is molded. These tires sell for 25 to 50 percent below new radial tires, yet often come with the same guarantee as new tires.

There are two types of retreads—"hot" and "cold." Hot retreads are made by a process of molding tread pattern into the rubber then bonding it to the casing at the same time. They have the advantage of lower cost and the look of a new tire. With cold retreads, a precured tread with the pattern already imprinted is bonded to the casing. Cold retreads usually give more miles of tread life.

A lot of drivers won't consider using retreads because they associate this type tire with the hunks of rubber they see by the side of the freeway. Yet in most cases the rubber fragments on freeways come from truck tires. These tires are recapped, not retreaded, and are run in pairs. When one tire goes flat the driver may not notice. As a result, the good tire heats up, and blows out leaving fragments.

European manufacturers have been retreading radials for over 10 years. In the U.S., retread companies are just starting to gear up to radial retreads now that radial casings are becoming more available.

Retreading can be a good bargain if the tires are bought from a reputable dealer, and backed by a strong guarantee. One thing for sure, retreads beat running around on bald tires by a long shot.

Higher Octane Fuel Give More Power?

A common belief among many motorists is that the use of premium grades of gasoline, as compared to regular grades, will deliver more power from the engine. This concept is not only wrong, but also motivates motorists to spend thousands of additional dollars a year for an octane difference they probably don't need.

Higher octane fuels are needed in some engines to prevent detonation – a combustion phenomenon which can be described as ping or engine knock. At highway speeds, inaudible detonation can result in severe damage to an engine and the spark plugs. Consideration is given to the grade of fuel used in any engine, but higher octane grades are used only as a means of providing sufficient anti-knock value to prevent detonation . . . not to increase power.

1975 cars equipped with a catalytic converter require the use of nonleaded gasoline; however, the octane rating of these fuels is sufficient to prevent harmful detonation.

(Courtesy Champion Spark Plug Co.)

About Miss DRIVER

Lovely Carol Flores likes modeling, horseback riding, swimming, water exercising, and most of all talking to and meeting people. The 18-year-old resident of San Bernardino, Calif., plans to study sociology in college. Carol told DRIVER, "Some of my friends have died or been seriously injured because of driving under the influence of alcohol. I feel it is extremely important not to drive after you've been out drinking." We couldn't agree more, Carol.

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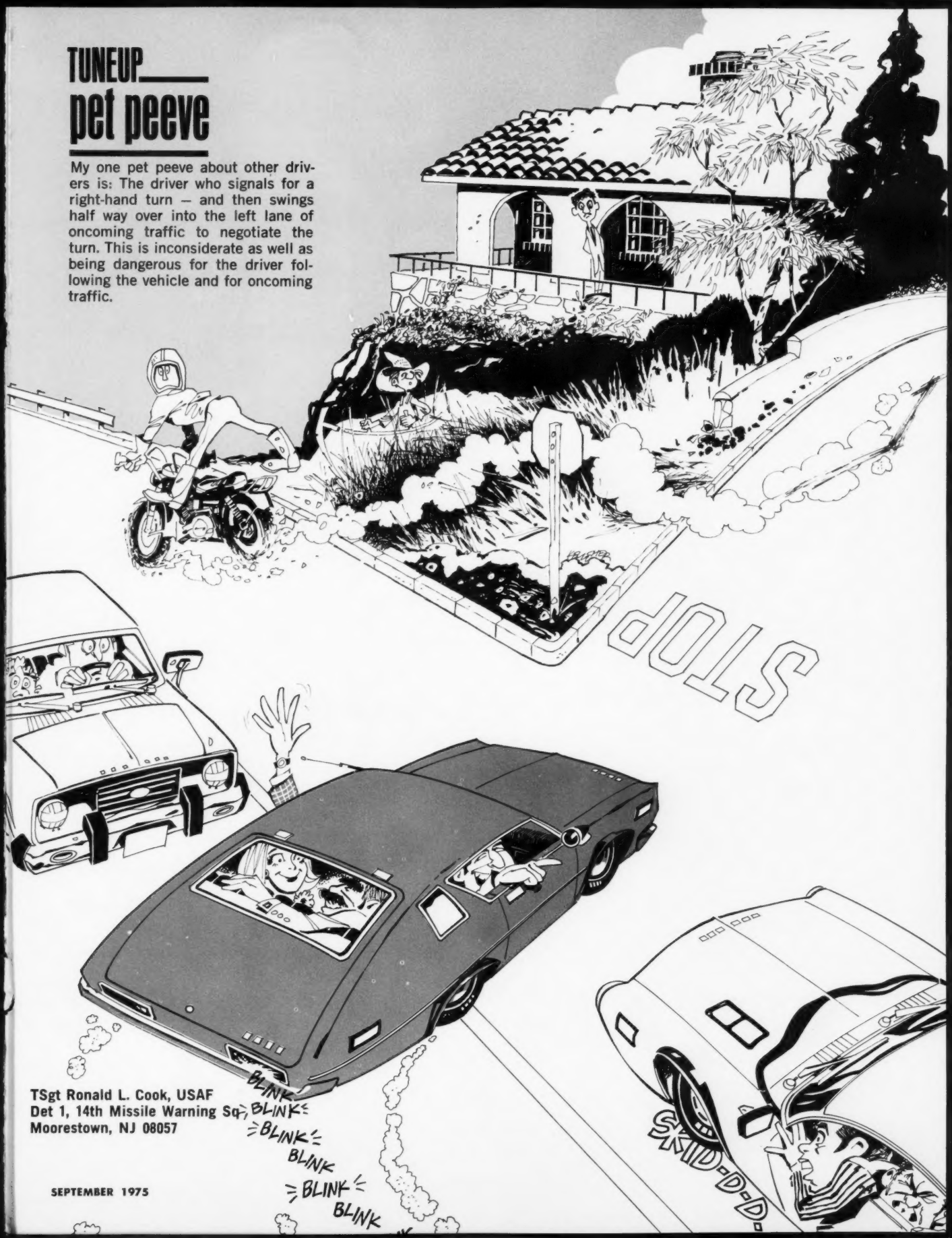
TUNEUP— pet peeve

My one pet peeve about other drivers is: The driver who signals for a right-hand turn — and then swings half way over into the left lane of oncoming traffic to negotiate the turn. This is inconsiderate as well as being dangerous for the driver following the vehicle and for oncoming traffic.



TSgt Ronald L. Cook, USAF
Det 1, 14th Missile Warning Sq
Moorestown, NJ 08057

GET THE LEAD OUT OF YOUR FOOT

Cars consume 20 percent less gasoline at 50 mph than they do at 70 mph. Speed also causes the chassis to age twice as fast at 70 mph as at 45 mph.

Information Courtesy
Automotive Parts and
Accessories Association